



# WARRINGTON

## Borough Council

Professor Steven Broomhead  
Chief Executive

David Herne  
Director of Public Health, Interim

East annexe  
Town Hall  
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07 March 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians/Carers,

**Re: Measles and Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine**

I am writing to you regarding measles and the MMR vaccine. There has recently been an increase in cases of measles across England. Most of these have been in Birmingham and the surrounding areas. The majority of these cases were in children under the age of 10, however the current outbreak has been affecting people of all ages. Many of these outbreaks have been linked to nurseries and schools, with over half of those affected requiring hospital treatment. In most of these cases the person was unvaccinated or had only had 1 dose of the vaccine.

Over the past few weeks, we have started to see cases in the North West, mostly in the Greater Manchester area but also in and around Liverpool. We now have cases in Warrington.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is asking people to be alert to the signs and symptoms of measles and ensure that they and their children have received two doses of the MMR vaccine.

Measles can be a very unpleasant illness. In some children it can be very serious and lead to hospitalisation, and in rare cases tragically cause death. People in certain risk groups, including babies and young children, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems are at an increased risk of serious complications, including miscarriage in pregnant women.

The free MMR vaccine is a safe and effective way of protecting against measles, as well as mumps and rubella. Having two doses of the MMR vaccine at the right time (dose 1 from 12 months, and dose 2 from 3 years 4 months) is the best way to protect your child and help prevent it spreading, especially to those most vulnerable.

Please make sure your child/children are up to date with their 2 MMR doses. To see if your child is up to date with their MMR vaccines, you can check their personal child health record (PCHR), known as the 'Red Book', or contact your GP practice.

If your child is aged 6 – 11 years, and hasn't had their 2 MMR doses, please contact your GP practice to make an appointment.

I would also advise all parents/guardians/carers to check their own MMR status and ensure they have had both doses. For women who are planning to get pregnant in the near future, please speak to your GP to ensure you have your MMR doses before you conceive.

Measles symptoms to be aware of include:

- high fever
- sore, red, watery eyes
- coughing
- small greyish-white spots in the mouth
- aching and feeling generally unwell
- a blotchy red brown rash, which usually appears after the initial symptoms.

Anyone with symptoms is advised to stay at home and phone their GP or NHS 111 for advice, rather than visiting the surgery or A&E, to prevent the illness spreading further.

Measles is spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. There are things you can do to reduce the risk of spreading or catching it:

- wash your hands often with soap and warm water
- use tissues when coughing or sneezing
- throw used tissues in the bin
- take up the offer of the MMR vaccine

For further information about:

- **Measles**, please visit: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/)
- The **MMR vaccine**, please visit: [ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2022/02/01/what-do-i-need-to-know-about-the-mmr-vaccine/](http://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2022/02/01/what-do-i-need-to-know-about-the-mmr-vaccine/)
- **Vaccinations and the UK childhood vaccination schedule**, please visit: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/)

Yours faithfully,



David Herne  
Director of Public Health, Interim